A SERMON PREACHED IN THE COVRT AT GREENWITCH, BEFORE King EDWARD the sixth, the first Sonday after the Epiphany. Anno Domini 1552.

By

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Isaiah 33.14.15.

Who among us shall dwell with the deuouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?

He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly: he that despiseth the gaine of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his eares from hearing of bloud, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil.

Psal. 50.22.

Oh consider this, ye that forget God, lest I teare you in pieces, and there be none that can deliver you.

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The Goſpell appointed for that day taken out of the ſecond chapter of Saint *Luke* the Euangeliſt, beginning at the 41 verſe, and continuing to the end of the chapter.

41 *Now his parents went to Ieruſalem every yeare, at the feaſt of the Paſſeover.*

42 *And when hee was twelve yeares olde, and they were come up to Ieruſalem, after the cuſtome of the feaſt.*

43 *And had finiſhed the dayes thereof, as they returned, the childe Ieſus remained in Ieruſalem, and* Ioſeph *knew not, nor his mother.*

44 *But they ſuppoſing that he had beene in the company, went a dayes journey, and ſought him amongſt their kinſefolkes, and acquaintance.*

45 *And when they found him not, they turned backe to Ieruſalem and ſought him.*

46 *And it came to paſſe three dayes after, that they found him in the Temple, ſitting in the middeſt of the Doctors, both hearing them, and asking them queſtions.*

47 *And all that heard him, were aſtonied at his underſtanding, and anſweres.*

48 *So when they ſaw him, they were amazed, and his Mother ſaid unto him, Sonne, why haſt thou thus dealt with us? Behold, thy father and I have ſought thee with heavie hearts.*

49 Then said he unto them: How is it that you sought me? Knew ye not that I must goe about my Fathers busines?

50 But they understood not the word that hee spake to them, &c.

A SERMON PREACHED IN THE Court at Greenwitch, before King EDVVARD the ſixth, the firſt Sonday *after the Epiphany: Anno Dom.* 1552.

FOr ſo much as the whole Goſpell, is more full of matter, and plenteous in myſteries, then that it can well be diſcuſſed within the limits of one Sermon; I haue taken for this time to intreate vpon this one ſentence ſpoken by Chriſt vnto his parents, verſe 49. *Know ye not that I muſt goe about my Fathers buſineſſe?* being content to omit the reſt, taking onely ſo much, as ſhall ſuffiſe to declare the occaſion whereupon he ſpake theſe words, for the fuller vnderſtanding of the ſame. Ye ſhal therfore vnderſtand that when our Saviour was come to the age of twelue yeares, giving attendance vpon his parents

rents to *Ieruſalem*, at the ſolemne feaſt of *Eaſter*, whither they yearely did repaire at that time of
Exod.23.14,15 ſincere devotion, and for the obedience of the law. After that *Ioſeph* and *Mary* had devoutly paſſed the dayes of the feaſt, and were returned home, it came to paſſe (not through blinde Fortune, but by God his providence, that his glory might appeare) that the bleſſed ſonne Ieſus tarried behind at *Ieruſalem*, and while his parents, either not taking good heed of him, or elſe going apart in ſundry companies, either of them truſting he had beene with the other, they went one dayes journy before they miſſed him: but after he was found wanting, they ſought him diligently amongſt their kinſefolkes and acquaintance, but found him not. Which was vndoubtedly vnto them a very croſſe of bitter affliction. So doth God many times exerciſe his elect and choſen with adverſity for their triall, and to keepe them in humility. When they were returned to *Ieruſalem*, and had long ſought him with ſorrowfull hearts, after three dayes they found him in the Temple.

Here then by the way me thinkes the holy Ghoſt teacheth vs a ſpirituall doctrine, and that right neceſſary: So long as wee ſeeke Chriſt in our owne kinſefolke, that is, our owne inventions and devices, we finde him not, but to find Chriſt, we muſt accompany theſe godly perſons *Ioſeph* and *Mary* vnto the Temple of his holy word, there Chriſt is found vnto ſo many as ſeeke him with ſuch humble ſpirits and meeke hearts as *Ioſeph*

ſeph and *Mary* did. They found him in the Temple not idly occupied as many are, not mumbling things he vnderſtood not, *ſine mente ſonum*, a confuſed ſound without knowledge: But they found him occupied in the Father of heaven his buſineſſe; as all men ſhould be in the Temple, either in ſpeaking to God by humble and hearty prayer, or hearing God ſpeaking to them in his moſt bleſſed word. So was Chriſt occupied amongſt learned men, & appoſing them. Where he teacheth vs to be alwayes as glad to learne as to teach. It is a probable conjecture that he opened to them the Scriptures which ſpake of *Meſſias*: a matter then in controverſie. But whatſoever their matter was, the Evangeliſt ſaith, *Hee made them all aſtonied at his vnderſtanding and anſweres, verſe* 47. So the glory of his Godhead even then began to ſhine. Where we may marke the wonderfull power of the Goſpell: Even the hard hearted that will not receiue it, yet the bright beames of the truth ſhining therein maketh them aſtonied. It cauſeth alſo the godly to marvaile, as *Mary* and *Ioſeph*, but their admiration alway ended with joy. Act. 4. 13. 14. 16.

Yet notwithſtanding his heavenly Majeſtie made all men to wonder, his Mother thought ſhe had ſome cauſe to expoſtulate with him for the great feare he had brought vpon them, caſting them into a dungeon of ſorrowes, and complaining, ſaid, *Sonne, why haſt thou, &c.* She ſeemeth to charge him with the firſt precept of the ſecond table, that he had not well intreated his parents.

But Christ so shapeth his answer, that he taketh away all her complaint: Teaching vs how the precepts of the second table may not be vnderstood in any wise to be a hinderance to the first. *Wist ye not that I must go about my Fathers businesse?* verse 49. Where our duty and service to God commeth in place, all humane service and obedience, which might be a hinderance thereto, to whomsoever it be, Father, or Mother, King or Kesar, must stand backe and giue place. Besides this, he teacheth vs here a most necessary lesson, for all men to know and beare away, which is, that his whole life & death was nothing else but a perfect obedience to the will of his heavenly Father, & that he was alwaies most busily occupied therin: And teacheth vs, that if we look by adoption to be brethren and coheires with Christ of his Fathers Kingdome, we must also with our Master and Lord yeeld vp our selues wholly to our heavenly Father his will, and alwayes be occupied in his businesse. *Exemplum dedi vobis, &c.* Ioh 13. 15. *I haue giuen you an example, that ye should doe, euen as I haue done to you.* Which lesson being so necessary for all Christians to be kept, and the breach thereof cause of all iniquity; I thought it good to passe over other places of ghostly instruction which this Gospel might minister, and to tarry vpon this one sentence: *Know ye not that I must goe about my Fathers businesse?* Intending to shew in order how all estates of men, the Clergie, the Nobilitie, and the Commonaltie, are vnder the band of this obligation, *Oportet, &c.* we

must;

muſt; and ought of neceſſitie to be occupied in the Father of heaven his buſineſſe. But firſt of all miſtruſting wholly mine owne ſtrength, I craue aide of you by your devout prayers.

Prayer.

Conatus Rex Chriſte meos tu dirige ſemper,
Et mihi ſit fœlix te duce principium.

Know ye not that I muſt goe about my Fathers buſineſſe? Luke 2 49.

After that our firſt parents through diſobedience and ſinne had blotted and disfigured the liuely Image of God, whereunto they were created, and might haue lived alway in a conformity to the will of God: Man was never able to apply himſelfe to God his Fathers buſineſſe, nor yet ſo much as to know what appertained thereto. *The naturall man* (ſaith *Paul*) *perceiveth not the things of the ſpirit of God, &c.* 1 Cor. 2, 14. Till Chriſt the very true Image of God the Father did come downe, and tooke mans nature vpon him: Which deſcent, as he declareth, was to fulfill for vs the will of his Father, that *like as by diſobedience of one man many were made ſinners; So by the obedience of one (Chriſt) many might be made righteous.* Heb 1, 3. & 2. 16. Rom. 5, 19. What time as *he became obedient vnto death, even the death of the Croſſe.* Phil. 2, 8. Which obedience leſt carnall men ſhould challenge to ſuffiſe for them, howſoever their life be a continuall rebellion againſt God and his holy will, (ſuch as there be a great number, and haue beene in all ages) Saint *Paul* wipeth them cleane

Heb. 5. 9. away; ſaying, *Chriſt hath become ſalvation* (not to all) *but to all that obey him.* Let no man therefore flatter and deceive himſelfe, if we will challenge the name of Chriſt his Diſciples, if we will worthily poſſeſſe the glorious name of Chriſtians we muſt learne this leſſon of our Maſter, to be occupied in our heavenly Fathers buſineſſe, which is to fly our owne will, (which is a wicked and wanton will) and wholly to conforme our ſelues to his will, ſaying as we are taught, *Fiat voluntas tua, thy will be done*: which, as Saint *Auguſtine* ſaith, *The fleſhly man, the covetous, adulterous, ravenous or deceitfull man can never ſay but with his lippes from the teeth forward, becauſe in his heart he preferreth his owne curſed will, ſetting aſide the will of God.*

Matth. 6. 10.

Now forſomuch as the greateſt part of the world haue at this day forſaken their Fathers buſineſſe, applying their owne, and are altogether drowned in ſinne: For, *The whole head is ſicke, and the whole heart is heavie: From the ſole of the foote to the head, there is nothing whole therein, &c.* And as Saint *Paul* ſaith, *All ſeeke their owne, and not that which is Ieſus Chriſts:* And I am here aſcended into the high hill of Sion, the higheſt hill in all this realme, I muſt needes as it is given me in commiſſion, *Cry aloud and ſpare not, lift vp thy voice like a trumpet, and ſhew my people their tranſgreſſions.* I muſt cry vnto all eſtates as well of the Eccleſiaſticall miniſtery, as of the civill gouernance, with the vulgar people. But foraſmuch as example of holy Scriptures with experience of Chriſts

Eſai. 1. 5, 6.

Philip. 2. 21.

Eſa. 58. 1.

Christs Church in all ages hath taught vs, that the fall of Priests is the fall of the people, and contrariwise the integrity of them is the preservation of the whole flocke: And the Ministers, as Christ saith, *being the light of his mystical body, if the light be turned into darkenesse, there must needs follow great darknesse in the whole body*: I think it fit to begin with them who seeme to have brought blindnes into the whole body, making mẽ to forget their heavenly Fathers businesse. They which should haue kept the candle still burning, these will I chiefly examine in that businesse which Christ so earnestly committed to all Pastors before his ascention; when he demaunded thrise of *Peter*, if he loved him, and every time vpon *Peters* confession, enjoyned him straightly to feed his lambes and sheepe. Wherein wee haue the true triall of all Ministers, who loue Christ, who apply his businesse. But to consider how it hath beene forgotten in the Church many yeares, it might make a Christians heart to bleede. Hee that wrote the generall Chronicle of ages, when he commeth to the time of *Iohn* the 8, and *Martin* the second, Bishops of *Rome* about 600. yeares agoe, conferring the golden ages going before with the iniquity of that time; when through ambition, avarice and contention, the office of setting forth Gods word was brought to an vtter contempt, and trodden vnder foote, in token whereof the Bible was made the Bishops foote-stoole, he falleth to a sodaine exclamation, and complaineth thus with the lamentable voice of the

Math. 6. 22, 23.

Ioh. 21. 15, 16, 17.

Fasciculus temporum.

Lamen.Ier.4.1. the Prophet *Ieremy*, *Helas, Helas, O Lord God; How is the golde become ſo dimme? How is the goodly colour of it ſo ſore changed? Oh moſt vngracious*
Pſal. 12. 1. & 14.3. *time*, (ſaith he) *wherein the holy man faileth* (or *is not*) *all truthes are diminiſhed from the ſonnes of men, there are no godly men left, the faithfull are worne out among the children of men.* In that time, as it appeareth both by this hiſtory and others, ambition and greedy avarice had taught Miniſters to ſeeke and contend for livings, who might climbe the higheſt by vtter contempt of their office, and our heavenly Fathers buſineſſe: And ſo to make *Chriſt his flocke a ready prey for the Divel, who goeth*
1 Pet.5.8. *about like a roaring Lyon ſeeking whom hee may devoure.*

Then the Biſhop of *Rome* abuſing alwayes *Peters* keyes to fill *Iudas* Satchels, diſpenſed with all Prelates (that brought any money) from obeying of Chriſts Commiſſion given to *Peter*, *Feede, Feede, Feede, my Lambes*, and *my Sheepe*; and ſtretched it ſo largely, that in ſtead of feeding Chriſt his Lambes and Sheepe, he alloweth them to feede Hawkes, Hounds, and Horſes, (I will
Matth.4 19. not ſay) Harlots. Then in ſtead of *Fiſhers of men*, he made them to become fiſhers of benefices and fat livings: He brought preaching into ſuch a contempt, that it was accompted a great abſurdity for a Cardinall to preach, after he had once
Faſciculus temporum. beſtrid his Moile.

But let vs ſee after, how this evill increaſed.
S Bernard. S. *Bernard* in his time about 200 yeeres after lamented, that when it ſeemed that open perſecution

tion of Tyrants and Hereticks was ceased in the Church, then another persecution farre worse, and more noysome to Christs Gospell did succeede, when the Ministers, Christs owne friends by pretence, were turned into persecuters. *My lovers and my friends stand aside from my plague, and my kinsmen stand afarre off.* The iniquitie of the Church (saith *Bernard*) began at the Elders: *Heu, heu, Domine Deus, &c.* *Alas, alas, O Lord God, they are the foremost in persecuting of thee, which are thought to love the chiefest place or preheminence in the Church.* This complaint with much more too long to be rehearsed, made Saint *Bernard* in his time against the Prelates of *Rome*, nothing afraid in the same place (for obscuring of Christ his Gospell) to call them Antichrists, and for murthering of silly soules redeemed with Christ his precious blood, hee maketh them more cruell persecuters of Christ, than the *Iewes*, which shed his blood. If the iniquity of *Rome* 400 yeares agoe was so great, and since hath not a little increased, it was high time that God should open the eyes of some Christian Princes to see the great abuses and enormities of *Romish* Bishops, and to deliver Christs Gospell out of captivity, and to bring downe his hornes, whose pride (if he might have had successe in his tyranny) began to ascend with *Lucifer* above the starres.

Psal. 38. 11.

Bernard.

It is not many yeares agoe, that a champion of his, named *Bellarmine*, writing against *Marsilius Paduanus*, in defence of *Rome*, hath not beene ashamed to leave in writing, that the Pope, *quodammodo*,

dammodo, after a ſort doth participate both natures, the Godhead and manhood with Chriſt, and that he may not be judged of the Emperour, becauſe he is not a meere man, but as a God upon earth; and God (ſaith he) may not be judged of man. What intollerable blaſphemy is this? If I had not read it my ſelfe, I could ſcarſely beleeve any ſuch blaſphemy to proceede from him which profeſſeth Chriſt. Doe you not perceive plainely the hiſſing and poyſon of the olde ſerpent, when he tempted our firſt parents, and promiſed they ſhould become like Gods? A vile wretched creature, wormes meate, forgetting his eſtate, muſt become a God upon earth: Such Gods ſhall follow *Iupiter*, *Mars* and *Venus*, into the pit of damnation. But ſome will ſay, What ſhould we ſpeake ſo much of the Biſhop of *Rome*, is he not gone? his power taken taken away? If Preachers would let him alone, the people would ſoone forget him. Truly for my part, if I had that gift, ſtrength & calling, I had rather (though I were ſure to ſmart therefore) ſpeake againſt his enormities in *Rome*, than to ſpeake of them here: And I thinke no man beareth (at leaſt I am ſure no man ought to beare) any malice or evill will againſt his perſon, in ſpeaking againſt his vice and iniquitie. *Wee fight not* (ſaith Saint *Paul*) *againſt fleſh and blood, but wee fight againſt the Prince of darkeneſſe, &c.* When any wicked man adverſarie to God and his word aſſayleth us, we muſt take him for no other, but as an inſtrument of the Divell, and Satan himſelfe to be our enemie, and none

Epheſ. 6. 12.

Auguſtine.

none other: And even as when an enemy assaileth us on horseback, we wish to overthrow the enemie, and win the horse, which may be profitable to us: So if the Divel could be cast out of such instruments as he hath in *Rome*, the men would become profitable members of Christ. But if the Divell sit so fast in the saddle, that hee cannot be turned out, we cannot amend it. Yet our duty is to pray unto God for them, and to hate none of Gods creatures, but rather that which Satan hath depraved. *Si forte Deus convertat corda eorum: If peradventure God will turne their hearts.*

But notwithstanding their faults ought to be chiefly tolde them in their presence, yet not there onely, but even here amongst us also, although it come not to their eares, it is not a little expedient oftentimes to cry and thunder against their errours and vices: Chiefly that so oft as we heare it, we may give God thankes (as we are most bounden) for our deliverance from that captivity of *Babylon*, as Saint *Peter* himselfe by the minde of ancient writers called it. Examples hereof we have in the Scriptures, the song of the *Israelites* after their deliverance out of *Egypt*; and afterwards when they were delivered by *Debora* from the tyranny of *Sisera*: and after the deliverance from *Holofernes*, by *Iudith*. Wee must be thankefull, lest for our unthankefulnesse God suffer us to fall into a worse bondage than ever we were in. But most of all it is profitable, that we may from our hearts renounce with *Babylon* all the vices of *Babylon*. For what did profit the

1 Pet. 5. 13.

Exod. 15. 1.

Iudg. 5. 1.

Iudith 16. 1.

deliverance out of *Egypt* to thoſe that did ſtill carry *Egypt* in their mindes through the deſert? What did it availe the deliverance out of *Babylon* to thoſe that did bring *Babylon* home to *Ieruſalem*? I feare me yet in *England* a great many like fleſhly *Iſraelites*, are weary of the ſweete Manna of the Goſpell, and ſavour of the fleſhly *Egypt*, deſiring to live ſtill under the bondage of *Pharao*.

But moſt of all it is expedient now for my purpoſe to ſpeake of that Sea, from whence, ſo farre as ever I could learne, thoſe intollerable abuſes have overflowne, and are come among us; which as yet are great enemies to Chriſts Goſpell here in *England*, making his Miniſters to ſet aſide his buſineſſe. Such abuſes as cannot yet be driven away, nor ſent home to *Rome* to their father: I meane of diſpenſations for pluralities, and tot quots; with diſpenſations for Non-reſidents, which avarice and idleneſſe tranſported hither from *Rome*: But for that they ſavour ſweete for a time to carnall men, they have ſo many patrons, they cannot be driven away, with other abuſes. And becauſe they are accounted to ſtand by Law, they are uſed as cloakes for iniquitie. Theſe may well be likened unto thoſe fatlings which *Saul* againſt Gods commandement did keepe alive, when he vanquiſhed the *Amalekites*. And truely till there bee ordained ſome godly lawes, to baniſh theſe with other abuſes, Gods wrath is kindled againſt us, to deſtroy all ſuch as are the maintainers of them. So long as it ſhall

1 Sam. 15. 9.

be lawfull for men to have ſo many livings as they can get, and diſcharge never a one, and ſo long as men may have livings to lye where they will in idleneſſe farre from their cure, farring themſelves like the Divells Porklings, and let a thouſand ſoules periſh for lacke of ſpirituall foode, God his buſineſſe ſhall never be well applyed, nor his Goſpell have ſucceſſe in *England*. It is pitty that ever it ſhould be needfull to wiſh any lawes to be made by man to bring Miniſters of Gods word to doe their duty, being ſo plainly expreſſed in God his law. If our hearts were not hardened more than *Pharaons*, our eyes of judgement more blinded with unſenſibleneſſe of heavenly things than the *Sodomites*, wee ſhould tremble and quake more at one threatning of Gods vengeance againſt negligent Paſtors that feede themſelves, that ſet aſide their heavenly Fathers buſineſſe, whereof the Scripture is full in every place, than wee ſhould feare all the powers upon earth, which, as Chriſt ſaith, having power of the body cannot hurt the ſoule. Mat. 10. 28. Oh Lord, how dare men be ſo bolde to take on them the name of Chriſt his Miniſters, and utterly refuſe the worke of their Miniſtery, by leaving their flocke, God his word being ſo plaine againſt them!

I marvell not ſo much at blind bayerds, which never take Gods booke in hand, ignorance hath blinded them, they know not the price of mans ſoule: but truely I could never marvell enough at learned men, which reade the Scriptures,

where their hearts and understanding should be, when they reade almost in every leafe of Scripture, besides all ancient writers, their owne sharpe sentence and judgement, which a whole day were too little to bring them in. O mercifull God, where be their eyes to see? their eares to heare? Doe they thinke there is a God which will be master of his word? I will let passe how they are called of the holy Ghost by most odious names, theeves, robbers, hypocrites, idols, wolves, dumbe dogs, with many such like worthy their deserts. I will onely declare, which me thinkes might suffice if there were no moe, how the Scripture maketh them most cruell murtherers, and guilty of bloud. In the 34 of Eccles. 34.22. *Ecclesiasticus* it is written, *The Bread of the needfull is the life of the poore, hee that defraudeth them thereof is a man of blood.* If this sentence be true in them that defraude the needy of their corporall foode, how much more are they which withhold the foode of the soule, being the worthier part of man, guilty of bloud? And therefore Ezech. 3.10. & 33.8. God by his Prophet *Ezechiel* telleth them, So many as perish by their negligence, their bloud shall be required at their hands, as men guilty of bloud. Now let them consider that if the bloud Gen.4.10. of *Abel*, one man cryed up unto heaven, for vengeance against *Cain*; what an horrible cry shall the blood of a thousand soules make before the throne of God, asking vengeance against that wicked Pastor which most cruelly hath hungered them to death, in witholding from them the foode

foode of life? The golde they lay up yeerely brought farre off by Farmers; their Rings and Iewels, their fine apparell, their beds they lye in, their meate and drinke, being the ſpoile of the poore, cry all for vengeance: The ſtones in the wal, the timber over their heads cry for vengeance. Habac. 2. 11.

Alas! how farre are they from excuſing themſelves with Saint *Paul*, ſaying to the people of *Epheſus*: *I take you to record this day, I am pure from the bloud of all men, for I have ſpared no labour, but have ſhewed all the counſell of God unto you.* But alas! theſe men may rather ſay, that they have kept counſell of Gods counſell. And where Saint *Paul* preached publickly, and by houſes, theſe men keepe ſilence, leſt they ſhould diſquiet the Divell in his fort; of whom Chriſt ſaith; *When a ſtrong man armed watcheth his houſe, the things that he poſſeſſeth are in peace, &c.* They ſay with the evill ſervant, *My Maſter is long a comming, and ſo beates his fellow-ſervants*, like cruell murtherers and tyrants, whoſe judgement ſhall be ſtraighter than any *Pharao*, *Nero*, or *Domitian* that ever reigned. But alas! it helpeth nothing to call or cry upon them. *They have hardened their hearts as an Adamant ſtone: Lazarus hath layen ſo long buried and ſtinking in worldly luſts and ſenſualities, the Preacher cannot call him out, nor yet remove the grave ſtone.* What ſhall I then doe? I muſt call unto You moſt noble Prince, and Chriſts Annointed. Act. 20. 26. Luke 11. 21. Mat. 24. 48. Zach. 7. 12. Iohn 11. 39.

I am come this day to preach to the King, and to thoſe which be in authority under him; I am very The King being abſent, theſe words were added.

very ſorry they ſhould be abſent which ought to give example, and encourage others to the hearing of Gods word: And I am the more ſorry that other Preachers before me complaine much of their abſence. But you will ſay, they have waighty affaires in hand. Alas, hath God any greater buſineſſe than this? If I ſhould cry with the voice of *Stentor*, I could, I ſhould make them heare in their chambers: But in their abſence, I will ſpeake to their ſeates, as if they were preſent. I will ca'l unto You noble Prince, as Chriſts Annoynted. Chriſts little flocke here in *England*, whom he hath committed to your charge, which wander by many thouſands as ſheepe having no Paſtors, they cry all unto You for ſuccour, to ſend them home their ſhepheards, to the end, that for things corporall, they may receive ſpirituall; and to let one Paſtor to have one onely competent living, which he may diſcharge. They call upon You to expell and drive away the great drones, which in idleneſſe devoure other mens labour, that after Saint *Pauls* rule, *Hee that will not labour be not ſuffered to eate: The little ones have asked bread, &c.* Chriſts little ones have hungered and called for the foode of the Goſpell a long time, and none there was to give it them. Now they cry unto You, take heede you turne not Your eares from them, leſt their blood be required at your hands alſo, and leſt God turne his eares from you. *Samuel* ſpake unto *Saul* fearefull words; *Becauſe thou haſt caſt away the word of the Lord, the Lord hath therefore caſt away thee from being*

Mat 9.36.

Gal.6.6.

2 Theſ.3.10. Thren.4.4. or Lament.Ier.

Prov.21.13.

1 Sam.15.23.

being King. You are made of God a Paſtor, a Paſtor of Paſtors. When *David* was annoynted King of *Iſrael*, God ſaid, *Thou ſhalt feede my people Iſrael*; You muſt feede, and that is, to ſee that all Paſtors doe their duty. The eye of the Maſter hath a great ſtrength: Your Graces eye to looke through Your Realme, and ſee that watchmen ſleepe not, ſhall bee worth a great number of Preachers. They call unto You to awake not onely negligent Paſtors, but alſo to take away other enormities, which have followed in heapes upon thoſe evills, Pluralities and Non-reſidents. 2 Sam. 5. 2. Pſal: 78. 71.

If I might have time, I thinke I ſhould be able to prove that the great ſwarme of evills which reigne at this day, have flowed from thoſe fountaines, or rather puddles: But I will onely ſpeake of the great abuſes, which by ſpoile and robberie doe hide the Goſpel, how they have enſued. Firſt of all the diſpenſations of Non-reſidents have brought forth farming of benefices to gentlemen, lay men, wherein they have found ſuch ſweeteneſſe and worldly wealth, that Preachers cannot have them, they will be perpetuall farmers. Which hath opened a gap for the Heathen, as *David* ſaith, or elſe for cloaked Chriſtians, much worſe than the Heathen, who have entred into Chriſts inheritance, ſpoiled his holy Temple, and robbed his Goſpell. Such ſeeme to make compoſition with our great enemie Satan: The idle and idol Paſtor ſaying, *Da mihi divitias, cætera tolle tibi: Give to me riches, take the reſt* Pſal: 80. 1. 3

to thy ſhare: whom Satan anſwereth; *Si mihi des animas, tu cape divitias: If thou wilt betray to me the ſoules, take riches for thy part.*

Another gap hath beene opened, for that the learned have not done their duties, no more than the unlearned: hereby Chriſts vineyard hath beene utterly ſpoyled: Patrons ſee that none doe their dutie, they thinke as good to put in Aſſes, as men. The Biſhops were never ſo liberall in making of lewde Prieſts, but they are as liberall in making lewd Vicars. I dare ſay, if ſuch a monſter as *Dervel Gatherel* the idol of *Wales* burnt in *Smithfield*, could have beene well conveyed to come to ſet his hand to a bill to let the Patron take the greateſt part of the profits, he might have had a Benefice. There is never any queſtion how he can occupie himſelfe in Gods buſineſſe. *Iohn Gerſon* a learned man in his time witneſſeth, that whoſoever in that time was admitted to a Benefice in *France*, muſt anſwer to theſe queſtions: *Scis utrumque Teſtamentum: Knoweſt thou the old Teſtament and the new?* And the ignorant was put backe; but with theſe men it skilleth not, if he never opened the Bible, ſo much the meeter for their purpoſe, as he is not able to ſpeake againſt their abuſes, but will ſuffer them to ſleepe in their ſinne. And will you ſee what prepoſterous judgement they uſe? For all worldly offices they ſearch meete and convenient men, onely Chriſtian ſoules ſo dearely bought are committed without reſpect to men not worthy to keepe ſheepe.

Gerſon.

Your

Your Grace hath ſent forth ſurveyers, as moſt needefull it was, to ſee there ſhould be no deceit in paiment of penſions, and other offices abroad: Would to God you would alſo ſend forth ſurveyers to ſee how benefices are beſtowed and uſed; how Chriſt and his Goſpell are robbed and diſhonoured, to the great decay of your Realme and Commonwealth: You ſhould finde a ſmall number of Patrons, that beſtow rightly their livings, ſeeking Gods glory, and that his worke and buſineſſe may be rightly applyed, without Simonie, or ſeeking their owne profit. For firſt, it is almoſt generall, to reſerve the farming to himſelfe or his friend, and to appoint the rent at his owne pleaſure. But worſe than all this, a great number never farme them at all, but keepe them as their owne lands, and give ſome three halfepenny Prieſt a Curats wages, nine or ten pounds. Even as *Ieroboam* made Prieſts of his owne for his hill altars to ſacrifice to his calves, that the people ſhould not goe up to *Ieruſalem*. Theſe *Ieroboams* will never let the people aſcend to *Ieruſalem* to finde Chriſt in the Temple of his word. They began firſt with Parſonages, and ſeemed to have ſome conſcience towards Vicarages, but now their hearts be ſo hardened, all is fiſh that commeth to the net. Gentlemen are Parſons and Vicars both, nothing can eſcape them. There be Vicarages about *London* having a thouſand people ſo ſpoiled; whereby it may appeare what is done further off. Your Grace may finde alſo where gentlemen keepe in 1 Kings. 13.33

their hands livings of forty or fifty pounds, and giveth one that never commeth there five or sixe pounds. Some change the ground of the benefice with their tenants, to the intent, if it be called for, the tenant shall lose it, and not they. Is not this a godly Patron? It shall appeare also, I could name the place, where a living of an hundred markes by yeare, if I say not pounds, hath beene solde for many yeares, I suppose an hundred save one, and so continueth still. O good Saint *Ambrose*, if thou hadst beene Bishop there, thou wouldest never have suffered such Wolves to devoure the flocke. It may well be called a devouring, for this living in a godly learned Pastors hand, might have refreshed five hundred in a yeare with ghostly foode, and all the Country about with Gods word: which, as I perceive in twenty miles compasse hath scarce one man to preach; and yet no place in *England* more needfull. For boyes and girles of foureteene or fifteene yeares olde cannot say the Lords prayer. Shall such injurie to Christ and his Gospel be suffered in a Christian Realme? That one enormitie crieth for vengeance till it be redressed. What shall I speake? Your noble men reward their servants with livings appointed for the Gospel. Certainly I marvaile that God holdeth his hand, that he destroyeth them not with *Nadab* and *Abihu*. Let them not abuse Gods patience, for if they doe not shortly repent, and bestow the livings better, both master and man shall burne in hell fire.

Croswaite and *Chesswicke.*

I am not able to rehearſe, nor yet any man knoweth all the abuſes which the Simoniackes, ambitious and idol Paſtors have brought unto Your Realme: By whoſe evill example ravenous wolves, painted Chriſtians, hypocrites have entred and defiled the Sanctuary, ſpoyled Chriſt and his Goſpel, to the deſtruction of his flocke. How great enemies they be to Chriſt, by keeping away his Goſpel, it ſhall appeare, if ye conſider what groſſe ſuperſtition and blindneſſe remaineth ſtill among the people, onely through lacke of faithfull Preachers: I paſſe over much infidelitie, idolatrie, ſorcerie, charming, witchcrafts, conjuring, truſting in figures, with ſuch other trumpery, which lurke in corners, and began of late to come abroad onely for lacke of preaching. Come to the miniſtration of the Sacraments ſet forth now by common authority after the firſt inſtitution; they thinke Baptiſme is not effectuall, becauſe it wanteth mans traditions: They are not taught how the Apoſtles baptized. A great number thinke it is a great offence to take the Sacrament of Chriſts body in their hands, that have no conſcience to receive it with blaſphemous mouthes, with malicious hearts full of all uncleanneſſe. Theſe come to it by threes of cuſtome, without any ſpirituall hunger, and know not the end wherefore it was inſtituted. They come to the Church to feede their eyes, and not their ſoules, they are not taught, that no viſible thing is to be worſhipped. And for becauſe they ſee not in the Church

Acts 8. 38.

Auguſtine.

the ſhining pompe and pleaſant variety (as they thought it) of painted clothes, candleſtickes, images, altars, lampes, tapers, they ſay, as good to goe into a Barne; nothing eſteeming Chriſt which ſpeaketh to them in his holy word, neither his holy Sacrament reduced to the firſt inſtitution. To be ſhort, the people are now even as the Iewes were at Chriſts comming, altogether occupied in externall holineſſe and culture, without any feeling of true holineſſe, or of the
Iohn 4.24. true worſhip of God in ſpirit and truth, without the which all other is meere hypocriſie. Many thouſands know not what this meaneth, but ſeeke Chriſt ſtill among their kindred, in mans inventions, where they can never finde him. As
Mat.15.3.9. the *Iewes* preferred mans traditions before Gods commandements, even ſo it is now: Men thinke it a greater offence to breake a faſting day, or worke upon a Saints day, than to abſtaine from profitable labour; and turne it to *Bacchus* feaſts, exerciſing more ungodlineſſe that day than all the weeke, deſpiſing or ſoone weary of Gods word. All this with much more cõmeth through lacke of preaching, as experience trieth where godly Paſtors be. It cannot much be marvailed, if the ſimple and ignorant people, by ſome wicked heads and firebrands of hell, be ſometimes ſeduced to rebell againſt their Prince, and lawfull Magiſtrates, ſeeing they are never taught to know their obedience and duety to their King and Soveraigne, ſo ſtraitly commanded in Gods law. But there hangeth over us a great evill, if

Your

Your Grace doe not helpe it in time: The Divell goeth about by theſe Cormorants that devoure theſe livings appointed for the Goſpell, to make a fortreſſe and bulwarke, to keepe learned Paſtors from the flocke; that is, ſo to decay learning, that there ſhall bee none learned to commit the flocke unto. For by reaſon livings appointed for the Miniſtery, for the moſt part, are either robbed of the beſt part, or cleane taken away, almoſt none hath any zeale or devotion to put their children to ſchoole, but to learne to write, to make them apprentiſes, or elſe to have them Lawyers. Looke upon the two welles of this Realme, *Oxford* and *Cambridge*, they are almoſt dried up. The cruell *Philiſtines* abroad, enemies to Chriſts Goſpell, have ſtopped up the ſprings of faithfull *Abraham*. The decay of ſtudents is ſo great, there are ſcarſe left of every thouſand, an hundred. If they decay ſo faſt in ſeven yeares more, there ſhall be almoſt none at all, and then may the Divell make a triumph. This matter requireth ſpeedy redreſſe; the miſeries of your people cry upon You noble Prince, and Chriſt for his flocke cryeth to You his Annoynted, to defend his lambes from theſe ravenous wolves, that robbe and ſpoile his Vineyard: Whoſe malicious endeavour, if Your Grace doe not ſpeedily reſiſt, there is entring into *England* more blinde ignorance, ſuperſtition and infidelitie, than ever was under the *Romiſh* Biſhop. Your Realme (which I am ſorry to ſpeake) ſhall become more barbarous than *Scythia*: which left

Gen. 26. 15.

God

God almighty lay to Your Graces charge, for ſuffering the ſword given to You (for the maintenance of the Goſpell) to lye ruſting in the ſheath; beſtirre now Your ſelfe in Your heavenly Fathers buſineſſe: withſtand theſe Cormorants by godly lawes, which robbe Chriſts Goſpell, and tread it downe. *They eate up Gods people as it were bread.* Your Grace ſhall have more true renowne and glorie before God, to defend Chriſts Goſpell againſt them, than to conquer all *Africa:* You ſhall doe God more ſervice to reſiſt this tyrany of the Divell and his members, than to vanquiſh the great Turke. Cut firſt away the occaſions of all this miſchiefe, diſpenſations for pluralities and tot-quots, for Non-reſidents; ſuffer no longer the tithes of the fartheſt parts of *England* to be due to be paid at *Paules* font: Cauſe every Paſtor, as his living will extend, to keepe hoſpitality himſelfe. But many thinke themſelves excuſed, for a yeare or two, becauſe their livings are taken away the firſt yeare: which undoubtedly doth not excuſe them for their preſence. I had rather begge, or borrow of my friends to helpe me to meate and cloth, than ſuffer the Divell to have ſuch liberty one yeare. It is no ſmall number of ſoules that may periſh by one yeares abſence. *Moſes* was from the people but forty dayes, and they fell to idolatry. Howbeit, foraſmuch as the Scripture doth allow the Miniſter a living the firſt yeare alſo; *He that ſerveth at the Altar, let him live of the Altar:* and againe, *Thou ſhalt not muzzle the Oxe that treadeth*

Pſal: 14.4.

Exod: 32.1.

1 Cor: 9.13.

out

out the Corne: I doe not doubt, but after Your Grace, with the advice of Your honourable Councell, have considered, how much it may set forth Gods glory, how many soules may be delivered from the clawes of the Divell, by sending Pastors to their livings, the first moneth, and suffering them to have no cloake of absence, You will soone restore the first yeares living, which in my conscience was wrongfully taken away at the first, as I suppose, by the Bishop of *Rome*. But I doubt not, if all were well redressed to this, that this also should soone be amended. Wherefore here I will desire God, to assist Your Grace in the advancement of his Gospell, which like unto *Iosias*, you have helped to bring to light, where it lay hid. 2 Kings 23. 8.

But yet, it is not heard of all Your people, a thousand pulpits in *England* are covered with dust, some have not had foure Sermons these fifteene or sixteene yeares, since Friers left their limitations, and a few of those were worthy the name of Sermons. Now therefore that Your glory may be perfect, all mens expectation is, that whatsoever any flatterers or enemies to Gods word should labour to the contrary, for their owne lucre, Your Grace will take away all such lets and abuses as hinder the setting forth of Gods most holy word; and to withstand all such robbers, as spoile his Sanctuary: travailing to send Pastors home to their flockes, to feede Christs lambes and sheepe, that all may be occupied in the Father of heaven his businesse. And

1 Pet:5.4. for this Your travaile, as Saint *Peter* ſaith, *When the Prince of all Paſtors ſhall appeare, You ſhall receive an incorruptible Crowne of glory.*

And thus farre concerning the Eccleſiaſticall Miniſtery.

The ſecond part, of civill Governours. But now to come to the civill governance, firſt, to all of the Nobility, Magiſtrates and Officers, all theſe muſt at all times remember, *They muſt be occupied in their heavenly Fathers buſineſſe.*

The Text. They have received all their Nobility, power, dominion, authority and offices of God, which are excellent and heroicall gifts, and if they be occupied in Gods buſineſſe, it ſhall redound to his glory, and the wealth of his people: But if they fall from his buſineſſe, and follow their owne will, or rather the will of Satan, the Prince of darkneſſe, and father of all the children of darkeneſſe, then ſhall all theſe glorious titles turne them to names of confuſion. For falling unto ungodlineſſe, and framing themſelves to the ſhape and faſhion of this world, Nobility is turned into vile ſlaverie and bondage of ſinne; power and dominion are turned into tyranny, authority is become a ſword of miſchiefe in a madde mans hand, all majeſty and honour is turned into miſerie, ſhame and confuſion: And ever the higher men be, while they ſerve ſinne, more notable is their vice, and more peſtiferous to infect, as a canker, by evill examples; becauſe all mens eyes are bent to behold their doings. *Every fault of the minde is ſo much more evident, as the party is more notable, who hath it.* For the worthier the

Iohn 12. 31. Epheſ. 2. 2. & 6. 12.

Rom: 12. 2.

Iuvenal.

perſon

perſon is which offendeth, the more his offence is noted of others. Seeing that vertue in all whom God hath exalted is the maintainer of their dignitie, without the which they fall from it; it ſhall be moſt needefull for them to embrace vertue, and chiefly humility, which is the keeper of all vertues, which may put them ever in remembrance, from whence power is given them, for what end, who is above them, a judge, an examiner of all their doings, who cannot be deceived. But as dignitie goeth now adayes, climbe who may climbe moſt higheſt, every man exalteth himſelfe, and tarrieth not the calling of God; humility is taken for no keeper, but for an utter enemie to Nobility. As I heard of a wicked climber and exalter of himſelfe, who hearing the ſentence of Chriſt in the Goſpel, *He that humbleth himſelfe ſhall be exalted:* hee Luke 14. 11. moſt blaſphemouſly againſt Gods holy word ſaid, ſure it was not true; for if I, ſaid he, had not put forth nor advanced my ſelfe, but followed this rule, I had never come to this dignity. For which blaſphemie, the vengeance of God ſmote him with ſodaine death.

I feare me a great number are in *England*, which though in words they denie not this ſentence of Chriſt, yet inwardly they can ſcarce digeſt it; elſe certainly they would never ſeeke ſo ambitiouſly to advance themſelves, to climbe by their owne might uncalled, never ſeeking the publicke weale, but rather the deſtruction thereof, for their private wealth and lucre; which cauſeth us

to have ſo many evill Magiſtrates. For all the while that men gather goods unjuſtly by polling, pilling, uſurie, extortion, and Simonie, and therewith ſeeke to climbe with bribes and buying of offices, it is ſcarce poſſible of ſuch to have wholeſome Magiſtrates. Saint *Bernard* ſaid, *Of a bitter roote commeth bitter fruite.* They enter in at the window, (which is uſed as well in civill government as Eccleſiaſticall) and therefore may Chriſts words well be verified, *He that entreth not in at the doore into the ſheepefold, but climbeth up ſome other way, the ſame is a theefe and a robber.* And *Eſaias* complaint againſt *Ieruſalem* taketh place among us; *Thy Princes are wicked and companions of theeves, they love gifts altogether, and gape for rewards: as for the fatherleſſe they helpe not him in his right, neither will they let the widdowes cauſe come before them.* They will not know their office to be ordained of God, for the wealth and defence of all innocents, for the aide of all that be in miſerie. The time is come that *Salomon* ſpeaketh of, *When the wicked man beares rule, the people ſhall mourne.* When had ever the people ſuch cauſe to mourne as now, when the greateſt number of all Magiſtrates are occupied in their owne buſineſſe, ſeeking rather the miſerie of the people, than to take it away; rather to oppreſſe them, than to defend them; their hands be ready to receive their monie, to robbe and ſpoile them, but their eares are ſhut from hearing their complaints, they are blinde to beholde their calamities.

Bernard.

Iohn 10 1.

Eſa. 1,13.

Prov. 29,2.

Looke

Looke in all Countries how Lady Avarice hath ſet on worke altogether mighty men, gentlemen and all rich men to robbe and ſpoile the poore, to turne them from their livings, and from their right, and ever the weakeſt goe to the walls. And being thus tormented and put from their right at home, they come to *London* a great nũber, as to a place where juſtice ſhould be had, and there they can have none. They are ſuters to great men, and cannot come to their ſpeech, their ſervants muſt have bribes, and that no ſmall ones: *All love bribes.* But ſuch as be ſo dangerous to heare the poorẽ, let them take heede leſt God make it as ſtrange to them when they ſhall call: for as *Salomon* ſaith, *Who ſo ſtoppeth his eare at the crying of the poore, he ſhall cry and not be heard.* We finde that poore men might come to complaine of their wrongs to the Kings owne perſon: King *Ioram*, although hee was one of the ſonnes of *Ahab*, no good King, yet he heard the poore widowes cauſe, and cauſed her to have right: ſuch was the uſe then. I would to God that all Noblemen would diligently note that chapter, and follow the example: It ſhould not then be ſo hard for the poore to have acceſſe to them, nor comming to their preſence, they ſhould not be made ſo aſtonied and even ſpeechleſſe with terrible lookes, but ſhould mercifully and lovingly be heard and ſuccoured gladly for Chriſts love, conſidering we are the members of his body, even as my hand would be glad to helpe my foote, when it is annoyed. O with

Eſay 1. 23.

Prov. 21. 13.

1 Kings 3. 16.

2 Kings 8. 3.

what glad hearts and cleare consciences might Noblemen goe to rest, when they had bestowed the whole day in hearing Christ himselfe complaine in his members, and redressing his wrongs! But alas! for lacke hereof, poore people are driven to seeke their right among the Lawyers: And there as the Prophet *Ioel* saith, Looke what the Caterpillers had left in their robbery and oppression at home, all that doth the greedy Locusts, the Lawyers, devoure at *London*: They laugh with the money which maketh others to weepe; and thus are the poore robbed on every side without redresse, and that of such as seeme to have authority thereto.

Ioel 1.4.

When Christ suffered his passion, there was one *Barrabas*, Saint *Matthew* calleth him a notable theefe, a gentleman-theefe, such as robbe now adayes in velvet coates; and other two obscure theeves, and nothing famous; the rusticall theeves were hanged, and *Barrabas* was delivered: Even so now adayes the little theeves are hanged that steale of necessitie, but the great *Barrabasses* have free liberty to robbe and to spoile without all measure in the middest of the Cittie. The poore Pirate said to *Alexander*, We robbe but a few in a shippe, but thou robbest whole Countries and Kingdomes. Alas silly poore members of Christ! how you be shorne, oppressed, pulled, haled to and fro on every side, who cannot but lament, if his heart be not of flint? There be a great number every terme, and many continually, which lamentably complaine for lacke

Matth. 27. 16.

lacke of juſtice, but all in vaine. They ſpend that which they had left, and many times more; whoſe ill ſucceſſe here cauſeth thouſands to tarry at home beggars, and loſe their right; and ſo it were better, than here to ſell their coates: for this we ſee, be the poore mans cauſe never ſo manifeſt a truth, the rich ſhall for money finde ſixe or ſeven Counſellers ſhall ſtand with ſubtleties and ſophiſmes to cloake an evill matter, and hide a knowne truth. A piteous caſe in a Chriſtian Commonwealth. Alas that ever manifeſt falſhood ſhould be maintained, where the God of truth ought to be honoured! But let them alone, they are occupied in their fathers buſineſſe, even the Prince of darkneſſe: *You are of your Father the Divell.* Iohn 8.44.

Yet I cannot ſo leave them, I muſt needes cry on Gods behalfe, to his Patrons of juſtice, to You moſt redoubted Prince, whom God hath made his Miniſter for their defence; with all thoſe whom God hath placed in authority under You. Looke upon their miſerie, for this is our heavenly Fathers buſineſſe to You appointed by his holy word. When I come among the people, I call upon them, as my duty is, for ſervice, duty and obedience unto their Prince, to all Magiſtrates, to their Lords, and to all that be put in authority over them; I let them heare their owne faults. But in this place my duty is, and my conſcience upon Gods word bindeth mee, ſeeing them ſo miſerably, ſo wrongfully, ſo cruelly intreated on ever ſide, in Gods behalfe to Rom: 13.4.

pleade

pleade their cauſe, not by force of mans law, but by Gods word, as an interceſſour. For as they are debters unto You and other Magiſtrates of love, feare, ſervice and obedience under God; ſo are You againe debters unto them of love, protection, of juſtice and equity, mercy and pitty. If You deny them theſe, they muſt ſuffer, but God ſhall revenge them. *He ſtandeth* (ſaith *David*) *in the congregation of gods, and as a Iudge among gods.* Take heede all you that be counted as gods, Gods Miniſters upon earth, you have one God Iudge over you, who as he in the ſame Pſalme ſharply rebuketh ungodly Rulers for accepting of perſons of the ungodly; ſo he telleth faithfull Chriſtian Magiſtrates, their true duties and buſineſſe in plaine words, *Defend the poore and needy, ſee that ſuch as be in neceſſitie have right, deliver the outcaſt and poore, ſave them from the hands of the ungodly.* Here have all Noblemen and Chriſtian Magiſtrates moſt lively ſet forth to them their heavenly Fathers buſineſſe, wherein hee would have them continually occupied: would to God the whole Pſalme were graven in their hearts.

Pſal. 82. 1.

Truely for lacke that this buſineſſe is not applied, but the poore deſpiſed in all places, it hath given ſuch boldneſſe to covetous cormorants abroad, that now their robberies, extortion and open oppreſſion, hath no end nor limits, no banks can keepe in their violence. As for turning poore men out of their holdes, they take for no offence, but ſay, *Their land is their owne, and forget altogether*

ther, that the earth is the Lords, and the fulneſſe thereof. Psal. 24. 1.

They turne them out of their ſhrouds as mice. Thouſands in *England* through ſuch, begge now from doore to doore, which have kept honeſt houſes. Theſe cry daily to God for vengeance, both againſt the great *Nimrods* workers thereof, and their maintainers. Gen. 10. 8, 9. There be ſo many mighty *Nimrods* in *England*, mighty hunters, that hunt for poſſeſſions and Lordſhips, that poore men are daily hunted out of their livings; there is no covert nor denne can keepe them ſafe. Theſe *Nimrods* have ſuch quick ſmelling hounds, they can lye at *London*, and turne men out of their farmes and tenements, an hundred, ſome two hundred miles off. O Lord, when wicked *Ahab* hunted after *Naboths* vineyard, he could not (though he were a King) obtaine that prey, till curſed *Ieſabel*, (as women oft times have ſhrewd wits) till ſhe tooke the matter in hand: So hard a thing it was then to wring a man from his fathers inheritance, which now a meane man will take in hand. And now our valiant *Nimrods* can compaſſe the matter without the helpe of *Ieſabel*. Yet hath *England* even now as great a number of *Ieſabels*, which to maintaine their intollerable pride, their golden heads, will not ſticke to put to their wicked hands. 1 Kings 21. 5.

O Lord what a number of ſuch oppreſſours worſe then *Ahab* are in *England*, which *ſell the poore for a paire of ſhooes!* of whom if God ſhould ſerve but three or foure as he did *Ahab*, to make the dogs lap the blood of them, their wives, and Amos 2. 6. 1 Kings 22. 38.

posterity, I thinke it would cause a great number to beware of extortion, to beware of oppression; and yet escaping temporall punishments, they are certaine by Gods word, their blood is reserved for hell-hounds, *Cerberus* and his company; which they nothing feare. A pittifull case and great blindnesse, that hearing Gods word, man should feare more temporall punishment, than everlasting.

Yet hath *England* had of late some terrible examples of Gods wrath in sodaine and strange
Esay 5.8. deathes of such as joyne field to field, and house to house: Great pitty they were not chronicled to the terrour of others which feare neither God nor man; so hardened in sinne, that they seeke
Psal. 52.1. not to hide it, but rather are such as glory in their mischiefe: which maketh me oftentimes to remember a writer in our time, *Musculus* upon
Musculus. Saint *Matthewes* Gospell, which marvelled much at the subtle and manifold working of Satan, how he after the expelling of superstition & hypocrisie, travelleth most busily to bring in open impiety: That whereas before, hypocrites, men feared men, and not God, now a great number feare neither God nor man: The most wicked are counted most manlike, and innocencie is holden for beastlinesse. Yet may we not say hypocrisie is expelled, for as many of these *Ahabs* as signifie they favour Gods word by reading or hearing it, or with prayer, *Honouring him* (as
Mat. 15.8. Christ saith) *with their lippes, their hearts being farre from him*; they are as detestable hypocrites

as

as ever were covered in cowle or cloyſter. I cannot liken them better than to the *Iewes*, that ſayd to Chriſt, *Haile King of the Iewes*. What their painted friendſhip is, and how of Chriſt it is eſteemed, Saint *Auguſtine* ſetteth forth by an apt ſimilitude: *Even as* (ſaith hee) *a man ſhould come to embrace thee, to kiſſe and honour thee upward, and beneath with a paire of ſhooes beaten full of nailes, tread upon thy bare foote, the head ſhall deſpiſe the honour done unto it, and for the foote that ſmarteth, ſay, Why treadeſt thou upon me? So when fained Goſpellers honour Chriſt our head, ſitting in heaven, and oppreſſe his members in earth, the head ſhall ſpeake for the feete that ſmart, and ſay, Why treadeſt thou on me?* *Paul* had a zeale towards God, but he did tread upon Chriſts feete on earth, for whom the head cried forth of heaven, *Saul, Saul, why perſecuteſt thou mee?* Although Chriſt ſitteth at the right hand of his Father, yet lyeth he in earth, he hungereth in earth, hee ſuffereth all calamities here on earth, he is many times evill intreated here on earth.

Mat. 27. 29.

Auguſtine.

Act. 9. 4.

Would to God wee could beare away this briefe and ſhort leſſon, that what we doe to his members upon earth wee doe to him; it would bring men from oppreſſion, to ſhew mercy, without which no man can obtaine mercy. If they would remember how the rich glutton was damned in hell, not as wee reade, for any violence, but for not ſhewing mercie; they might ſoone gather how ſharpe judgement remaineth for thē, which are not only unmercifull, but alſo violently

Mat. 25. 40.

Iam 2. 13.

Luke 16. 23.

lently adde thereunto oppreſſion; who are ſo farre from mercy a great number. Their hearts will ſerve them to deſtroy whole townes, they would wiſh all the people deſtroyed to have all the field brought to a ſheepe paſture. O cruell mercie! It is like to the mercy of a Biſhop of *Magunce* in *Germany*, named *Hatto*, which as the Chronicles mention, 500 yeares agoe in time of a great dearth, called all the poore people in all the whole Country into a great barne, pretending to make a great dole; but having them ſure enough, hee fired the barne, and burnt them all up, ſaying, *Theſe be the Mice which devoure up the Corne.* This was a pollicy to make bread better cheape; But for this unmercifull mercie, God made him an example for all unmercifull men to the worlds end: For a multitude of Rattes came and devoured him in ſuch terrible ſort, that where his name was written in windowes, walls, or hangings, they never ceaſed till it were raſed out.

Regiſtrum mundi.

Some peradventure ſhrinke to heare ſuch cruelty, and the terrible vengeance that enſued: But doubtleſſe there is almoſt daily as great crueltie practiſed amongſt us, by ſuch bloud-ſuckers, as being infected with the great dropſie of avarice, alway drinking and ever athirſt, by famiſhing poore people, drinking up their bloud, and with long continuance therein torment them more grievouſly, than he that burnt them all in one houre. Now ſeeing, as I ſaid, this crueltie, robberie, and extortion groweth daily to ſuch intollerable

intollerable exceſſe, & overfloweth this Realme, becauſe it is not puniſhed nor reſtrained; it is high time for all thoſe Magiſtrates that feare God, not onely to abſtaine from this evill themſelves, but to reſiſt it alſo. It is God his buſineſſe, hee hath commanded it, and will ſtraitly require it. Would to God all Noblemen would beware by the example of *Saul*; he had a commandement to apply Gods buſineſſe; *Goe and ſmite Amalecke, and have no compaſſion on them, &c.* He left his buſineſſe undone, ſpared *Amaleck*, and the faireſt of the beaſts; but for this negligence he received of *Samuel* a ſorrowfull meſſage from God: *Becauſe thou haſt caſt away the word of the Lord, he hath caſt thee off alſo from being King.* Even ſo in every Chriſtian Commonwealth, God hath commanded Rulers to deſtroy *Amalecke*, all extortion, oppreſſion and robbery, to defend the needy and all innocents. If they looke not to this buſineſſe, but ſuffer *Amalecke* to live, not onely to live, but to grow in might, ſo truly as God liveth hee ſhall caſt them off, they ſhall not be his Magiſtrates. 1 Sam. 15. 3.

But let it once be knowne that not onely our moſt noble King, (whoſe godly example is a Lanterne to all other) but that alſo all his Nobles about him, have wholly bent themſelves in his buſineſſe, to withſtand all violence, and to oppreſſe all oppreſſion, for defence of Gods people; that the wicked *Ahabs* might know, that God had in *England* a great number of Paſtors, Patrons, feeders and cheriſhers of his people: it

ſhould doe that which the feare of God cannot doe; that is, ſtoppe the great rage of violence, oppreſſion and extortion; which taken away, would plucke from many their vanity in ſuperfluous and monſtrous apparell, in ſumptuous building, ſuch as ſeeke to bring Paradiſe into earth, being the greateſt cauſes of all oppreſſion and ſpoiling of poore people; which moſt vaine vanities and blinde affections never reigned ſo much in all eſtates in *England*, as at this day.

Charles the fifth to the Duke of Venice.

It was a notable ſaying of *Charles* the fifth Emperour of that name, to the Duke of *Venice*, when he had ſeene his Princely Pallace, a Paradiſe upon earth: When the Duke looked that he ſhould have praiſed it exceedingly, *Charles* gave it none other commendation but this: *Hæc ſunt quæ faciunt invitos mori: Theſe earthly vanities* (ſaid he) *are they which make us loth to die.* A truer ſentence could not well be ſpoken by any man. I would wiſh we ſhould looke on all our buildings: when the beautie thereof ſo increaſeth, that it would grieve us to depart from it, and to plucke downe that peece againe, and to remember withall the holy Patriarkes, and with Saint *Paul* ſay, that we have not here a continuing Citty, but wee ſeeke one to come.

Heb. 13. 14.

But truely methinkes now in *England* for our vaine delight in curious buildings, God hath plagued us as hee did the builders of *Babel*, not with the confuſion of tongues, but with the confuſion of wits; our fancies can never be pleaſed, plucke downe and ſet up, and when it contenteth

Gen. 11. 7.

teth us not, downe with it againe. Our mindes are never contented, nor never ſhall be while we ſeeke felicity where it is not. Would God every one would conſider what a hell it ſhould be to all that vainely delight herein, when death ſhall with great violence plucke them from their earthly heaven. Moreover, extortion taken away, ſhall ſtraight abate the unmeaſurable exceſſe in coſtly fare, which goeth beyond the vaine banquetting of *Sardanapalus*, or *Vitellius*, I dare not adde *Cleopatra*, which ſupped up with a ſpoonefull of vineger a pearle ualued at 50000 crownes. It would alſo abate the intollerable exceſſe in apparell, which cauſeth us to have robbers in velvet coates, with S. Martins chaines. But I muſt for lacke of time paſſe over theſe enormities, which alone give matter enough for whole Sermons: I leave them for others which ſhall follow, more able to paint out ſuch monſters in their colours.

And here in concluſion I deſire all Noblemen and godly Magiſtrates, deepely to ponder and revolve in their godly memory, what acceptable ſervice they may doe, chiefly to God, and ſecondly to the Kings Majeſty, and his whole Realme, in employing their whole ſtudy, how to reſiſt all ſuch as ſpoile Chriſts people, whō he ſo tenderly loved, that he ſhed his bloud for them. Vertue joyned with Nobility ſpreadeth her beames over a whole Realme. And ſo Your diligence in Gods buſineſſe ſhall ſoone inflame all other to follow your example, that all may oc-

cupie

cupie themſelves in God the Fathers buſineſſe.

The third part, of the Commons.

But now that I haue hitherto charged the Eccleſiaſticall Miniſters, and after, the civill Gouernours, and all rich and mighty men, with negligence in God his buſineſſe; methinkes I doe heare the inferiour members rejoyce and flatter themſelves, as if all were taken from them, and they left clear in Gods ſight: But if they conſider their eſtate by Gods word, they ſhall finde ſmall cauſe to advance themſelves. For Gods word plainly telleth us, both that evill and dumbe Paſtors, and wicked Rulers and Magiſtrates, are ſent of God, as a plague and puniſhment for the ſinnes of the people. And therefore both *Eſay* and *Oſea* after moſt terrible threatnings of Gods vengeance for ſin, bring it in as a moſt grievous plague of all, that even the Prieſts, which ſhould call them from ſinne, ſhall become ſo evill as the people. Which plague Saint *Bernard* ſaid in his time was come with a vantage, for becauſe the Prieſts were much worſe than the people. And *Amos*, as a moſt grievous puniſhment of all other, threatneth hunger, not of bread, but of hearing Gods word. And concerning the civill Magiſtrates, it is plaine in *Iob*, that for the ſinnes of the people God raiſeth hypocrites to reigne over them, that is to ſay, ſuch as haue the bare names of governours and protectours, and are in deede deſtroyers, oppreſſours of the people, ſubverters of law and equitie.

Eſay 24. 2. Oſea 4. 9.

Amos 8. 11.

Iob, 34. 30.

And ſeeing it is ſo, ſo many as feele the griefe and ſmart of this plague, ought not to murmure againſt

againſt other, but patiently ſuffer, and be offended with their owne ſinnes, which have deſerved this ſcourge, and much more; and ſtudie for amendment, that God may take it away. For if they continue as they doe, to murmure againſt God and their Rulers, as the *Iſraelites* did, to provoke daily his anger by multiplying ſinne in his ſight, with envie, malice, deceit, backbiting, ſwearing, fornication, and with utter contempt of his word; he ſhall for their puniſhment, ſo multiply the number of evill Governours, unjuſt Iudges, Iuſtices, and Officers; that, as it was ſpoken by a Ieſter in the Emperor *Claudius* time, *Vapiſcus.* The Images of good Magiſtrates may all be graven in one ring.

God hath cauſe greatly to be diſpleaſed with all eſtates, when every man ſhould looke upon their owne faults to ſeeke amendment, and as it is a Proverbe lately ſprung up, *No man amendeth himſelfe, but every man ſeeketh to amend other*; and all that while nothing is amended. Mighty men and Gentlemen, they ſay, the Commonalty live too well at eaſe, they grow every day to be gentlemen, and know not themſelves; their hornes muſt be cut ſhorter, by raiſing their rents, and by fines, by plucking away their paſtures, and ſo by many goodly pretences Lady Avarice can whiſper in their eares. The meane men, they murmure and grudge, and ſay, the gentlemen have all, and there were never ſo many gentlemen and ſo little gentleneſſe. And by their naturall Logicke you ſhall heare them reaſon how theſe

two *Conjugata*, theſe yoake-fellowes, gentlemen and gentleneſſe ſhould be baniſhed ſo farre aſunder: And they lay all the miſerie of this Commonwealth upon the gentlemen their ſhoulders. But alas! good Chriſtians, this is not the way of amendment. *Si invicem mordetis & comeditis: If ye bite and devoure one another,* as Saint *Paul* ſaith, *take ye heede leſt ye be conſumed one of another.* Gal. 5. 15.

Hiſtories make mention of a people called *Anthropophagi*, eaters of men, which all mens hearts abhorre to heare of: And yet alas by Saint *Pauls* rule, *England* is full of ſuch *Man-eaters*: Every man envieth another, every man biteth and gnaweth upon another with venemous adders tongues, farre more noyſome than any teeth. And whereof commeth it? Covetouſneſſe is the roote of all; every man ſcratcheth and pilleth from other; every man would ſucke the bloud of other: every man encroacheth upon another. Covetouſneſſe hath cut away the large wings of Charity, and plucketh all to her ſelfe, ſhe is never ſatisfied, ſhee hath cheſted all the olde golde in *England*, and much of the new; ſhee hath made that there was never more idolatry in *England*, than at this day: But the Idols are hid, they come not abroad. Alas noble Prince! the Images of Your anceſtours graven in golde, and Yours alſo, contrary to Your minde, are worſhipped as gods; and all that while the poore lively Images of Chriſt, periſh in the ſtreets, through hunger and colde. This commeth when Covetouſneſſe hath baniſhed from amongſt us Chriſtian Charitie,

tie, when like moſt unthankefull children, wee have forgotten Chriſt his laſt will, which hee ſo often before his paſſion did inculcate, *Love, love, love, love one another.*

And herein we ſhew our ſelves worſe than any carnall ſonnes: which be they never ſo unkinde, yet alway they remember the laſt words of their earthly parents. Nay rather I may ſay, wee are much worſe than the brute beaſts, of whom when we conſider how wonderfully nature hath framed them to concord and unity, to preſerve and helpe one another of their owne kinde; it may make us utterly to be aſhamed. The Harres, as Saint *Auguſtine* writeth, ſwimming over a narrow Sea, in a company together, with much paine can beare up their heads in the water; for the remedy whereof, every one layeth his head upon the hinder part of another: When the foremoſt (having no ſtay) is ſore weary, hee commeth behinde, and thus every one in his courſe taketh paine for the whole herde. If men indued with reaſon would learne of theſe unreaſonable creatures, this leſſon to helpe one another, as we are commanded by Saint *Paul*, ſaying, *Beare yee one anothers burthen, and ſo you ſhall fulfill the Law of Chriſt*: how ſoone then ſhould Charity, the band of perfection, which ſeeketh not her owne, but rather to profit others, be ſo ſpread among all degrees, that our Commonwealth ſhould flouriſh in all godlineſſe? But alas! we ſee that all goeth contrary. For whiles all men, as S. *Paul* ſaith, *ſeeke the things that be their owne, and not other*

Auguſtin.

Gal: 6. 2. Col: 3. 14. 1 Cor: 13. 5 Philip: 2. 4.

Phil: 2. 4.

mens, not the things which appertaine to Christ: Philautia, that is, selfe-love, and love of private commodity, hath banished charity, and love to the Commonwealth.

And if we should seeke the cause and ground of all these evills, why God his businesse is so neglected among all estates and degrees, I thinke it would appeare to be ignorance of his will: For if *Mary* and *Ioseph* so godly and devout a couple, understood not for a time Christs saying, *Wist ye not that I must goe about my Fathers businesse?* as Saint *Luke* saith, *They understood not that saying*: What marvell is it, if we living so carnally and drowned in worldly pleasures, and framed to the shape of this world, be ignorant in our heavenly Fathers businesses? and therefore cannot well apply them. But shall we thinke this to be very strange? Many apply not God his businesse nor his will, which yet would disdaine to be counted ignorant therein. But undoubtedly, good Christians, it is an infallible verity, that negligence in performing God his will, commeth of ignorance. It is all one to know God and his will; and Saint *Iohn* saith plainely, *He that loveth not, knoweth not God.* For if hee doe know God, he cannot but love him, and love is alwayes occupied in Gods businesse. By this rule Saint *Augustine* proveth, wee cannot keepe perfectly the first precept, to love God so well as wee ought to doe, while wee are in this mortall life: For all our love commeth of knowledge, but in this life, *Ex parte cognoscimus, Our knowledge is imperfect.*

1 Iohn. 4. 8.

Augustine.

1 Cor. 13. 9.

perfect. And thus Saint *Augustines* rule grounded upon Saint *Iohn* is true, That so farre as we know God, so farre we doe love him; and so they that love him nothing at all, they know him nothing at all: Although they seeme to have never so much windy knowledge, puffing up their stomacks with presumption, as the Apostle saith, *Scientia inflat, Knowledge maketh a man swell*: So that if a man have studied the Scripture all his life long, and learned the whole Bible by heart, and yet have no love, hee is ignorant of God his will. The poore man that never opened booke, if the love of God be shed abroad in his heart by the holy Ghost, hee overcometh him, in the knowledge of Gods will. The godly *Pembue* of whom wee reade in the Ecclesiasticall history, when he was first taught the first verse of the 39 Psalme, *I have said, I will take heed to my wayes, that I offend not in my tongue*. He refused a long time to take out a new lesson, judging his first lesson to be unlearned, till he could perfectly practise it, by an holy conversation. So ought we alwayes to make our account to have learned Gods word, when we have learned charity and obedience. But this knowledge, though it lacke in many learned, yet ordinarily it cometh alwayes by hearing Gods word: *Rom.* 10. *Faith cometh of hearing, and hearing of the word of God*. Wherefore, as I said, their case is to be lamented, which would gladly heare Gods word, and can have no Preachers. Then may we say, God hath abundantly powred his grace among us, that have his Gospel so clearely

1 Cor: 8. 2.

1 Cor: 13. 2.

Rom: 5. 5.

Pembue.

Psal: 39. 1.

When Gods word is truly learned.

Rom: 10. 17.

ſet forth unto us, and have ſuch opportunitie,
Luke 8,8 that there wanteth nothing but *eares to heare*. We muſt have eares in our hearts to let it ſinke in. But, O men, thrice unhappy, and children of greater damnation, if we harden our hearts, and
2 Cor:6, 1 Heb:6,8. *receive ſuch abundance of grace in vaine! The earth* (ſaith Saint *Paul*) *which after the raine* (*of Gods grace*) *bringeth forth thornes and briers, is reproved, and is nigh unto curſing, whoſe end is to be burned.*

Would God all that be in the Court, that will not vouchſafe, having ſo many godly Sermons, to come forth of the Hall into the Chappell, to heare them, would remember what a heavy ſtroke of Gods vengeance hangeth over all their heads that contemne his word: and over thoſe in all places, which had rather be idle, and many times ungodly occupied in wanton and wicked paſtimes, than come to the Church, prophaning the Sabbath day, appointed for the ſervice of God, and the hearing of his word, beſtowing it more wickedly than many of the *Gentiles*. Yet if they would come to the Sermons, though their hearts were not well diſpoſed, Gods word might winne them, as Saint *Auguſtine* was wonne by the preaching of Saint *Ambroſe*, when hee came onely to heare his ſweete voice and eloquence. O that they knew what diſhonour they did to Chriſt, that eſteeme him ſo light, to preferre vaine, nay I ſay, wicked things to the hearing of his holy word. Are not theſe they, as Saint *Paul*
Heb:10,19. ſaith, *which tread under foote the Sonne of God, count the bloud of his Teſtament, wherein he was ſanctified,*

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an unholy thing, and doth despite to the spirit of grace? O Lord, how canst thou holde thy hands from punishing this unthankfulnesse? Certainely I thinke all other wickednesse compared to this, is shadowed, and seemeth to be lesse.

I would to God wee would remember many times the plagues and tokens of Gods extreme wrath, that came upon the *Iewes*, when first unthankfully they had rejected Christ; and after his word: when they were destroyed by *Titus* and *Vespasian*, such a plague as never came upon any other Country. And looke on their vices; there reigned avarice, ambition, pride, extortion, envie, adultery; but these reigned also in other Countries about, where no such vengeance did light: but then did God thus exercise his wrath upon them to the terrour of all other, for contempt of his holy word, and for their unthankfulnesse; which being called so many wayes, by his Prophets, by himselfe, by the Apostles, still hardened their hearts. This exceeded all other wickednesse in the world. Now if as great unthankfulnesse be found in many of us towards Christ, and his Gospel, set forth so plainly unto us; how can we without speedy repentance, but looke for the terrible stroke of vengeance? *God* (saith *Val. Max.*) *hath feete of wooll, hee commeth slowly to punish; but hee hath hands of yron, when hee commeth he striketh sore.* Val. Max.

Philip King of *Macedonie*, hearing of one in his Kingdome which refused most unthankfully to receive a stranger, of whom before hee had Philip King of Macedony

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beene succoured in shipwrack, in extreme needs, for a worthy punishment caused to be printed in his forehead with an hot yron these two words, *Ingratus hospes, An unthankfull guest.* O Lord, if we consider, when we were strangers from God, in the shipwrack of sinne, how mercifully Christ hath delivered us, and borne our sinnes upon his body: If after all this we most unthankfully refuse to receive him, by refusing of his word, may we not thinke our selves worthy many hot irons, to print our unthankfulnesse to our shame? And undoubtedly so many as continue thus unthankfull, though it be not written in their foreheads, to put them to worldly shame; yet shall it be graven in their conscience to their everlasting confusion and damnation; *When the bookes of every mans conscience shall be laid open,* as *Daniel* saith. Their judgement shall be more strait than that of *Sodome* and *Gomorrha.* Which that we may avoid, let us all from the highest to the lowest, pray with one accord, that God may soften and prepare our hearts with meekenesse and humility, and thankfulnesse to embrace his Gospel, and his holy word; which shall instruct us in his holy will, and teach us to know his businesse every man in his vocation, that (as Saint *Paul* saith) *Every man may give attendance to themselves, and to the flocke, wherein the holy Ghost hath made them Overseers, to feed the congregation of God, which he hath purchased with his blood:* that all other ravenous Wolves may bee turned to good Shepheards. So that Christ his Ministers may enjoy the portion assigned

Dan. 7. 10.

Mat. 10. 15. & 11. 24.

ſigned for the Goſpell; That all Magiſtrates and Governours may give their whole ſtudie to the weale publicke, and not to their private wealth; That they may be maintainers of juſtice, and puniſhers of wrong: And that all inferiours may live in due obedience, meekely, contenting themſelves every one in their vocation, without murmuring or grudging: That under Chriſt and our noble Prince his Miniſter here on earth, wee all being knit together with Chriſtian charity, the bond of perfection, may ſo faſten our eyes upon our Lode-ſtarre, Gods word, that it may continually be a lanterne to our feete, to guide our journey through the deſert and darke wilderneſſe of this world; That our eyes be never ſo blinded with ſhadowes of worldly things, to make us to embrace falſe, deceitfull, and temporall felicity, for that which is true, ſtedfaſt and everlaſting: That this lanterne, which ſhineth now, as Saint *Paul* ſaith, *Tanquam ſpeculum, As through a glaſſe, and in a darke ſpeaking, when that which is imperfect ſhall be taken away, it may preſent us to that cleare light, which never is ſhadowed with any darkneſſe:* That we maybehold the bleſſed ſight of the glorious Trinity, the Father, the Son, & the holy Ghoſt; to whom be all praiſe, all honour and glory world without end, *Amen.*

Pſal: 119, 105
2 Pet: 1, 19
1 Cor: 13, 12.
Iam: 1, 17

God ſave the King.

FINIS.